

SETTING UP A SHOW

by Raafiq Alim





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1. The Budget



First you must evaluate your resources and how much you are willing to spend on things such as a headliner, a DJ, and flyer promotion. This will give you an idea of the amount you can afford to spend on the event overall.



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2. Scouting a Venue



When scouting for venues, a few factors must be determined: The capacity of the venue, whether or not they have a sound system, what kind of music events they have regularly, what ages they cater to, etc.



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3. Securing a Booking at a Venue



To secure a date for an event at a venue, you must get in contact with the person that handles booking for that particular venue. Introduce yourself and the company or organization you represent and express your interest in throwing a party or holding an event at their establishment. Make an offer as to what you would like to do and what you want out of the venue. You might want to schedule a meeting to check out the venue if you've never been there before.



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4. Making a Deal (Verbal Agreement)



Once a date for an event is booked, you must negotiate a payment situation. You can ask for 100% of the door (the cover charge paid when customers enter the venue) or work out a split of the door and/or liquor sales. It all depends on the deal you work out with venue management. It is very important to stay in touch with the management of the venue in the weeks leading up to the show so you can be aware of any changes that may be made (or the possibility of cancellation).



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5. Securing a DJ



Most local DJs charge around \$200 for 4-5 hours of spinning. Make sure you choose a DJ that compliments the openers and headliner. The DJ is the backbone of the event; they will set the show off and keep the crowd interested in between acts. It is important that your DJ is adequately prepared to back up all of the performers at your event. Make sure you select your DJ based upon their style and availability, and notify them about the date and time of your event when approaching them to work with you.



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6. Selecting Opening Acts



To ensure a substantial turnout, opening acts should be selected based on their draw (popularity) in the community. You should also choose artists that are willing to help promote the show via flyers and social media. Be sure not to go overboard on the amount of opening acts in order to avoid scheduling problems. There should be around 4-5 opening acts each allotted a 15-20 minute time slot.



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7. Selecting a Headliner



To increase your chances of creating a buzz while promoting your show and boost attendance, sometimes a headlining act is needed. This headliner doesn't necessarily have to be a superstar, but you should select someone who is both reasonably well known in your area and affordable. The headlining act should be allotted anywhere from 30 minutes to an hour of performance time.



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8. Hosting



To make sure your event flows smoothly from performer to performer, it is best to have an event host to introduce the DJ and acts and also briefly talk to the crowd between performances. Your host can also periodically direct the crowd's attention to the merch table to increase sales.



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9. Flyer Promotion (Street Team)



Using old school paper flyers and posters in your local community is a great way to notify your scene about your upcoming event. Depending on the amount of flyers you print or order, you should distribute them to local business in your area such as **head shops, barber shops, gas stations, record stores, liquor stores, tattoo shops, and hookah bars** as well as in the venue where the event is taking place.



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10. Online Promotion



Social media outlets such as **Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, and Gmail** are modern ways to efficiently and effectively spread the word about your upcoming event. Consistency is key. Make sure you have a strong online network established so your supporters can share and retweet your posts. Post some info about your event at least on a weekly basis.



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11. The Schedule



A performance schedule should be drawn up prior to the event and followed as closely as possible. A key factor of presenting your event as a polished production is how organized and punctual it is. The host, DJ, and performers at your event must be frequently updated about any changes made to this schedule.



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12. Documentation



Another good way to develop notoriety for your brand, whether it be artists or a label is to consistently record video footage of your events. This is useful for not only your resume but also for future promotional and booking opportunities.



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13. Radio Promotion



Radio promotion can be useful to reach mass amounts of people at any given time depending on your genre of music and the particular style of the radio show you seek for promotion. College radio stations will usually promote your music for free (and possibly give on-air interviews), while commercial radio will normally charge a fee for ad time.



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14. Merchandise



Selling merch such as T-shirts, CDs, stickers, hats, hoodies, and even personalized flash drives can be a great way to generate additional revenue at your event. You should have someone overseeing sales throughout the course of the night to assure maximum profit.